

Renter's Guide to Energy Efficiency



If you are renting, you may think that making your home more energy-efficient will be challenging, but it's not only possible – it's also beneficial for reducing your utility costs and improving your home's comfort.

This infosheet offers simple tips to save energy, lower your utility bills, and reduce your carbon footprint plus key considerations when searching for a rental.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR ENERGY CONSUMPTION AT HOME

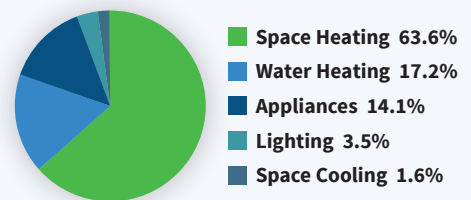
What Contributes to Your Energy Bills?

Regardless of whether your space and water heating systems use gas or electricity, your energy bills generally reflect the following components: space and water heating, lighting, and appliances. Additionally, some homes have cooling equipment, a ventilation system, or an EV charger, which all contribute to energy consumption.

What Uses the Most Energy?

Typically, space heating consumes the most energy in a home, followed by water heating. If your home has a high-performing building envelope (for example good windows, air sealing, extra insulation, etc.) the space heating portion of the energy use pie pictured will decrease.

Distribution of Residential Energy Use in Canada 2019



Source: [Natural Resources Canada](#)

LOW/NO-COST MEASURES* TO IMPROVE THE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF YOUR SPACE

Install Simple Water Conservation Measures
Showers are often the largest single contributor to overall hot water use in a home, accounting for up to 15% of total household energy consumption¹. Water-saving showerheads and aerators can save both water and energy.

Choose Energy Efficient Lighting
LED bulbs use less power and last 10-25 times longer than traditional bulbs when you choose the right product. When purchasing new lights, opt for ENERGY STAR-qualified LED bulbs for better quality and energy savings.

Keep Appliances Clean
To maintain optimal efficiency, regularly empty the lint trap in your dryer to improve airflow, and clean the coils on your fridge to ensure proper ventilation.

Draftproofing for Savings & Comfort
Drafts allow heated air to escape and cold outside air to enter, requiring more energy to condition your space. Reduce heat loss by sealing gaps with caulking, weatherstripping, and draft stoppers, while being mindful not to make permanent alterations without permission.

Change Filters Regularly
A clogged air filter restricts airflow and reduces energy efficiency. Check and replace filters in your furnace or heat pump regularly, especially during peak heating and cooling seasons.

***If you live in an income-qualifying household you can apply for the [Energy Conservation Assistance Program](#) or for a [Free Energy Saving Kit](#).**

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT ENERGYSAVENEWWEST.CA OR CALL 604.515.3818

¹ <https://www.bchydro.com/powersmart/residential/tips-technologies/showerheads-faucets.html>

THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE SIGNING YOUR LEASE

To identify a home with better energy performance, here are some key considerations to keep in mind while searching for your new rental:



Space Heating System

Space heating often makes up more than 60% of your utility bills. Older systems tend to be less efficient and more costly to operate. Depending on the model and age, the efficiency of gas furnaces or boilers can range from 78% to 98%, while electric heating systems range from 100% (e.g., baseboards) to 200-300% (e.g., heat pumps). Ask your landlord about the system's type, age, and maintenance history.



Thermostat & Control

A programmable thermostat can help you save on space heating and cooling costs. Since space heating is typically the largest energy expense, this can make a significant difference during the winter months. Also, being able to control the temperature in different areas can help save even more energy.



Domestic Hot Water Heating System

Water heating is usually the second largest energy consumer in a home. The type of system and the fuel used to heat the water will also affect operating costs. Newer water heating systems tend to be more efficient and cheaper to operate.



Air Infiltration

A tightly sealed home requires less energy to heat. Inspect for gaps and leaks around windows, doors, trims, attic hatches, and where pipes go through walls or ceilings. Ask your landlord to address these issues before you move in to minimize energy loss.



Windows

Check whether the windows are single, double, or triple-pane, as well as the type of frames. Vinyl frames are generally more energy efficient than wood or aluminium frames. If the windows are old and single-pane, consider adding drapes, window coverings, or window inserts to improve comfort.



ENERGY STAR® Rating for Appliances

Household appliances such as refrigerators, dishwashers, stoves/ovens, and clothes dryers are among the top energy consumers. Look for the ENERGY STAR® symbol, which indicates better energy efficiency. Also, inspect appliance gaskets and coils for tightness and cleanliness, as this can improve efficiency.



Other Things You May Want to Ask Your Landlord About:

- ▶ **Insulation** – If the R-value (insulation level) is known for the attic/ceiling, exterior walls, exposed floors, and basement, it can help you assess the energy efficiency of the home.
- ▶ **EnerGuide Rating System Score** – The EnerGuide Rating System is nationally recognized tool from Natural Resources Canada that estimates the energy usage of a home or building.
- ▶ **Metering** – If your home is individually metered, managing your own thermostat(s) can offer you more opportunities to save energy.

MOVE-READY INVESTMENTS

Invest now and take them with you to your next home.



Energy Saving Power Strips – Devices like TVs and game consoles use power even when off. Switching off a power strip cuts phantom energy use from multiple devices at once.



Energy Efficient Small Appliances

Using smaller kitchen devices – like microwaves, toaster ovens, blenders, and air fryers – helps save energy compared to operating a full-sized oven.



Programmable / Smart Thermostat

Heating costs rise ~5% for every degree above 20°C (68°F)². Smart thermostats lower energy use by automatically turning heating or cooling down when it's not needed.



Window Inserts/Drapes - Using window inserts or drapes can assist in keeping your home cooler in the summer. They can also be reused if your new home's windows are similar in size.

Need Additional Support?

Energy Save New West:

📞 1-604-515-3818

🌐 energysavenewwest.ca/contact-us

CleanBC Better Homes Energy Coach:

📞 1-844-881-9790

🌐 betterhomesbc.ca/contact-us

Empower Me (Multi-lingual Services):

📞 604-307-8428

🌐 energysavenewwest.ca/empower-me

² <https://www.bchydro.com/powersmart/residential/tips-technologies/baseboard-heaters.html>